

Rainbow Band-aids by nightcore

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/F, Fluff, Mentions of Violence, Non-Graphic Violence, mentions of abuse, mentions of smoking, sorry about the relationship tags, uhh, work with me el has 15 names

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Summary:

A few months pass after the events of season two, and despite everything, Max's shithead brother is still kicking. After a particularly bad time, Max runs as far as she can, letting her legs take her wherever they want to go, and she ends up on the doorstep of a familiar shack in the woods.

Rainbow Band-aids

Author's Note:

based on a post from @rosywheeler on tumblr :0

speaking of, this is also posted on my tumblr,
streddie ! rb it there if you want i'll love you forever

When El opened her door, she didn't expect Max. She *especially* didn't expect Max, hair knotted and face bloodied, to be smiling at her like she was an angel that came straight down from heaven. She had her skateboard in both hands, the wood now broken in a less-than-clean line with sharp ends sticking out of each side. One eye was bruised and her nose was bloodied, red smearing across her cheek and over her freckles. A few cuts and a cigarette burn decorated her cheekbone.

Max mumbled out something of a 'Hi' but El said nothing, only shuffling to the side and motioning for her to come in. The Hoppers still lived in the forest shack, his paranoia and her fear getting to the better of both of them, but it had become more of a *home* than just a place to live since everything calmed down. El pointed to the couch and Max obliged, dropping her broken skateboard on the floor next to the welcome mat and sitting down.

"Stay." El said, nodding. Max smiled again, but winced, because the adrenaline that had gotten her through the woods and away from her attacker must've been wearing off by now. El let her eyes linger for a moment longer, taking in her broken state once again, then shot off to the bathroom.

El wasn't tall enough to reach the top shelf of the medicine cabinet, so she had to climb haphazardly onto the sink. She would've used her powers, but she had made a promise to Hopper a few weeks ago to use them *only if necessary*. If she could reach it with her body, she was going to reach it with her body.

She adjusted her leg to get into a better position, narrowly avoiding hitting her head on the mirror door. El couldn't really see what she

was reaching for, so she grabbed the first box of something that *felt* like band-aids and hopped back down. Inspecting the box, they were rainbow, waterproof, and kinda small (but big enough to get the job done), so she won the band-aid lottery. Joyce had bought them for her a few months back, when her paranoia was still at a high. El smiled.

When she came back, Max was clearly hurting. Her head was pressed against the back of the couch and her eyes were closed, brows furrowed. El thought for a moment, then pushed past a few chairs to make her way to the kitchen, grabbing an ice pack from the freezer.

“Here,” El said, slowly taking a seat next to her on the couch and handing her the ice pack. Max put her hand out without even glancing at what it could be, and recoiled slightly when the cold touched her skin. She laughed a little, and turned to El.

“Thanks.” Her voice was quiet, but her gratitude was genuine. She put the icepack to her bruised eye, and watched as El fiddled with the unopened box of band-aids. El didn’t ask why she was so cut up and beaten. Instead, she broke the silence by saying something that felt much more important.

“Why did you come?” El finally got the cardboard on the top of the box to rip, and she let out a little sigh of relief.

“Because I can’t be home.”

El didn’t take her eyes off the box, “No. Why did you come *here*?”

Max sighed, “I don’t know, really,” she paused, resting her arm and letting the ice pack drop, “I wasn’t really thinking, I just ran wherever my legs took me.”

“Lucas lives closer.” El pulled a band-aid out of the box, taking the plastic off one side and carefully sticking it above the wound. She slid the plastic off the other and smoothed it down, gently, careful not to put too much pressure. Max leaned into her touch, slightly, and El smiled.

“I guess I wanted to see you.”

El felt her face heat up, and she pulled her hand off Max like she was a burning oven -- too hot to touch. Max's smile faded for a second, but came back when she watched the redness spread across El's face like wildfire.

"I'm going to get a towel." Her voice was hidden under her breath. El stood up, not looking back at Max and heading straight for the kitchen.

"For what?"

"Blood."

She pulled a few paper towels from one of the drawers and sat back down next to Max, picking up her legs and crossing them so she wouldn't have to lean awkwardly. She wipes the blood, taking care to avoid any bruises or burns, and ignores Max's constant *'El, I'll do it, if you want me to.'*

Once she was satisfied (and the trash can looked like the aftermath of a crime scene), El went back to the band-aids. There was a silence between them now that wasn't uncomfortable, but it was obvious, and neither girl seemed to know how to break it. El tucked a piece of stray hair behind Max's ear and gingerly placed another band-aid on her cheek.

"El, hey," Max started, but El interrupted her.

"If he ever touches you again, I'll kill him, okay? Promise . "

"You really don't need to --" El cupped her face in her hands, leaning her head down slightly but not breaking eye contact.

" *Promise.* "

Max was a little taken aback, eyes widening and her posture straightening a bit. Her face lit up with shades of red, and she opened her mouth to say something, but closed it again.

El's not sure which one of them leaned in first, but Max tasted like copper and pride. She wasn't sure how pride had a flavor, but it was there, and there was no other word to describe it. The kiss lasted

barely seconds, because they were both laughing and they kept knocking their teeth together, causing Max to wince a little bit, but it was perfect.

El leaned against Max, their foreheads touching, her hands still around her face. She smiled.

“If we ever have to... *kill* my brother, El,” Max said, pulling away and grabbing El’s hand like it was the only thing that kept her stable and fidgeting with her fingers, “then I want us to do it together, okay? Ride or die.”

El laughed, “Ride or die?” The repetition of the phrase was a question of it’s meaning, and Max understood.

“It means... you’ll do anything for that person, even if you were going to die. Like a friend, but way cooler.”

“Like girlfriend?”

Max blushed, gripping onto El’s hand a little harder. She used her free hand to put the ice pack back up to her face, and looked over to the bookshelf in the corner of the room. Her voice was significantly quieter when she spoke, “Yeah, like girlfriend.”

El laughed, twirling the box of rainbow band-aids in her hands. She let go of Max (ignoring her slight groan of protest) and pulled another one out of the box, taking the plastic off both ends and cringing a little at her sticky fingers. She patted it onto Max’s shirt, right where her heart was.

“Ride or die.”

Max laughed. She intertwined their fingers again, and El adjusted herself so she could lean against her shoulder. Maybe they didn’t really know what was happening, and maybe they’d have to explain to Hopper in a few hours why the two girls were a) covered in blood & rainbow band-aids and b) cuddling on the couch, but right now, it really felt like *home*.

Author's Note:

i hope this is any good hsdsg i went through it and
re-read it a few times but i am half asleep right now